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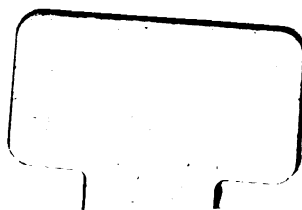
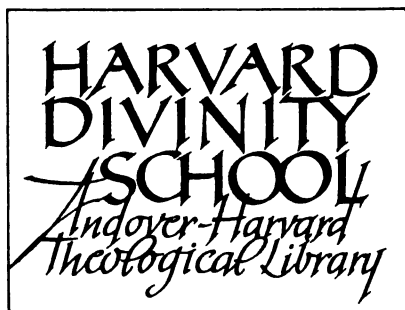
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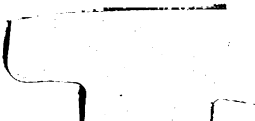
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TO THE

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OF THE

Union Literary Society,

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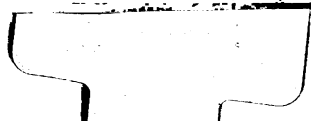
MIAMI UNIVERSITY, OHIO.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

MIAMI UNIVERSITY, Oct. 14th, 1844.

Mr. Alexander Campbell:

Dear Sir—The members of the "Miami Union Literary Society," through us their committee, tender you their sincere thanks for the eloquent and appropriate address delivered before them the 6th of August.

We would respectfully request a copy of your speech for publication.

Yours very respectfully,

E. PATTERSON EFFINGER,
H. C. NOBLE,
JAMES CLARK,

Committee.

BETHANY, Va., October 21, 1844.

Gentlemen—Though the address which I had the honor to deliver to your very reputable and distinguished Society in August last, was got up in the midst of circumstances no way propitious to much concentration of mind; still, from the very flattering and complimentary terms in which you are pleased to speak of it, and from the conviction that the subject of which it treats is one of no ordinary importance to the highly gifted youth of our country, I cannot withhold it from any publicity which either your judgment or partiality may dictate.

Wishing you and the other members of the Miami Literary Society all the rewards consequent upon a well spent youth and a useful manhood, I remain yours very respectfully,

A. CAMPBELL.

Messrs. R. PATTERSON EFFINGER,
H. C. NOBLE,
JAMES CLARK, } *Committee.*

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RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEN OF GENIUS.

AN ADDRESS, &c.

Mr. President and Gentlemen,

Members of the Union Literary Society of Miami University:

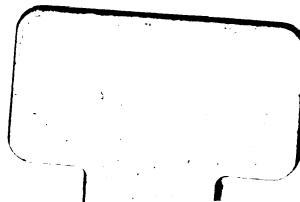
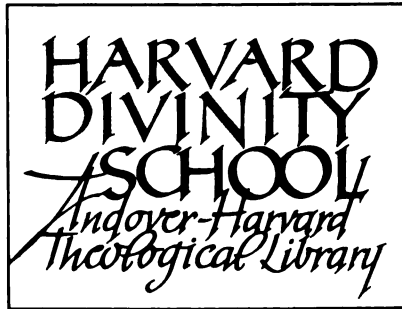
Soon as I had obtained my own consent to appear before you on the present occasion, in pursuance of the very polite and flattering invitation I had received from you, I immediately laid all my powers of invention under tribute to furnish a subject worthy of your attention.— But, to my great disappointment, I never knew them pay any tax imposed upon them with so much reluctance. Weeks passed away before I could even fix upon any topic; and after I had resolved upon one, new, unexpected, and inexorable calls upon my time and labor so crowded upon me as to leave but a few fragments to devote to a subject, which, in my humble opinion, deserves a year rather than a few hours, and a volume rather than a single address.

Accustomed only to read what is written or to speak extemporaneously, and not at all to recite from memory, I have sketched a few thoughts upon the RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEN OF GENIUS; which, without arther introduction or apology, I now submit to your most kind and candid consideration.

Human responsibility, gentlemen, is a momentous theme and of transcendant importance to the world. In the amplitude of its comprehension it contemplates man in every power and capacity of his nature, and in all the conditions of his existence. It views him in all his relations to that mysterious and incomprehensible whole, of which he is so important a part, indicated by the all-engrossing terms of *Creator* and *creature*. A complete and perfect knowledge of the subject, were it made dependent upon our own exertions, would require an intimate and perfect acquaintance with the universe. But in this it may be said to correspond with every other subject of thought, as no one ever yet understood an atom of the universe who did not understand it all. We are not, however, made dependent for the science of our duty upon our ability to acquire a knowledge that is wholly unattainable. The divine precept happily comes to our relief and rescues man from a difficulty absolutely insurmountable.

Men, indeed, are not generally satisfied with a clear broad precept. They are curious to know the reason why it is so commanded. This they have not, in any case, perfectly succeeded in ascertaining; and, in

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10 RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEN OF GENIUS.

The beauty as well as the happiness of the universe requires inequality. Equal lines, smooth surfaces, and eternal plains have no beauty. We must have hill and dale, mountain and valley, sea and land, suns of all magnitudes, worlds of all sizes, minds of all dimensions, and persons and faces of divers casts and colors, to constitute a beautiful and happy world. We must have sexes, conditions, and circumstances—empires, nations, and families—diversities in person, mind, manners, in order to the communication and reception of happiness. Hence our numerous and various wants are not only incentives to action, but sources of pleasure, both simple and complex—physical, intellectual, and moral.

Hence the foundation and the philosophy of unequal minds—unequal in power, in capacity, and in taste—unequal in intelligence, activity, and energy. The inequalities of mind are numerous and various as the inequalities of matter. One mind sports with worlds—another, with atoms. One man perches himself on Mount Chimborazo, and communes with the stars—another delves into the earth in search of hidden treasures, and buries himself in mines and minerals. One man moves along with the tardiness of the ox in the drudgery of life—another ascends in a balloon and soars above the clouds. Here we find a Newton measuring the comet's path; a Franklin stealing fire from heaven; a Columbus in search of a new world; and there a sportsman with his hounds in quest of a fox. One delights in his revelling and song, in riotous living and the giddy dance—another, in locking up his golden pelf in an iron chest. Talk we, then, of minds equally endowed by nature or improved by art! No such minds ever composed any community. Varieties, all manner of varieties, are essential to society. The world needs the rich and the poor—the young and the aged—the learned and the unlearned—the healthy and the infirm—the cheerful and the melancholic. These call forth all our energies, open channels for all the social virtues, lay the basis of our various responsibilities, and constitute much of the happiness of this life. They furnish opportunities for communicating and receiving benefits.

The positive and the negative belong as much to society as to electricity. These relative states belong to all earth's categories. Some are positive, and some negative, in health, wealth, genius, learning, cheerfulness, contentment; the one imparts, and the other receives blessings, and thus the circle of social happiness is completed.

But the world that now is, in more senses than one, is the offspring of a world that once was. We have derived more than our flesh, blood, and bones from our ancestors. We speak their language, read their



books, learn their customs, imbibe their spirit, copy their manners, and are the complex result of all their institutions. Our language, religion, and morality, are alike hereditary. We shall just as soon invent a new language, as a new religion, objectively considered. Of all creatures, man is the most imitative. His whole person, head, face, and hands, body, soul, and spirit, are, more or less, shaped through the influence of this mysterious law of transformation. We do not only speak the language of our own country, but the provincialisms of our nurseries. The gift of all tongues did not, because it could not, annul the Galilean brogue. Nor does the casual interchange of nations deface the national head, form of person, or gait, of early education and youthful association.

Need we farther proof that men are, to an extent, involving all their essential interests, subject to the law of imitation, and, consequently, example and precept are the two grand formative influences of human destiny. From this point, then, we may look more earnestly, as well as more intelligently on the whole subject of human responsibilities. If, indeed, as could be clearly shown, it is most certain that the physical, intellectual, and moral constitution of one generation essentially depends upon the intelligence, religion, and morality of its immediate predecessor; and if parents, teachers, and men of more advanced age, unavoidably impress their image on those brought into life, and up to manhood, under their influence; follows it not, that men of transcendent genius have a mighty influence, and are awfully responsible to God for the application of that intellect and influence delegated to them? It is a startling proposition, that a truly intelligent and religious community could, according to the laws of our own being, gradually introduce a more vigorous, long living, intellectual, and moral population, than is possible to any ignorant and immoral people in existence; yet it is not more startling than true.

But let us, for the sake both of argument and illustration, look for a moment at some of the men of genius that have lived in the world.—A mere specimen or two of those of the last and present century, must, for the present, suffice.

In works of genius and general literature, no writer of the 18th century obtained a higher conspicuity, or a greater celebrity than Voltaire. Distinguished from infancy with superior intellectual endowments, a sprightly imagination, great versatility of genius, a ready and sparkling wit;—he is said to have written poetry while yet in his cradle. When passing through the College of Louis the Great, comet like, he dazzled with the lustre of his genius, and the brilliancy of his path, not only his fellow students, but all the great masters of science and liter-

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ature which then adorned that Royal College. In admiration of his powerful intellect, and captivating eloquence, and in anticipation of his future greatness, Ninon De L'Enclos, bequeathed to him two thousand livres to purchase a library.

The vivacity of his wit, and humor, as well as his devotion to the muses, early drew him away from the study of the law, gave him a passport to the society of men of learning, and introduced him to the courtiers of Louis XIV. Even in his youth he became a favorite, both of the tragic and of the comic muse. He successively shone, a star of the first magnitude, amongst the courtiers of St. Cloud, St. James, and those of Berlin. His ascendancy over the French King, over George I, and his Queen Caroline, and afterwards over the Prussian Monarch, from whom he received a pension of two and twenty thousand livres, are to be regarded as the trophies of his genius; as monuments of his extraordinary endowments.

In proof of his powers of satire, and that against the government too, the Bastille was honored with his company for one whole year. And had it not been for the admiration of his *Œdipus*, the first fruits of his tragic muse, on the part of the Duke of Orleans, he might have been doomed to a longer imprisonment. This admonition did not long restrain the impetuosity of his mind, its recklessness of the moral consequences of its career. His *Lettres Philosophiques*, so profane and dissolute in their witticism, soon obtained the honor of a public conflagration at the hand of the public hangman, and that, too, by order of the Parliament of France. Despite of all these marks of public displeasure, by the singular merits of his *Mahomed*, *Merope*, and *Alzier*, he obtained the honor of the first dramatic poet of the age; and was again introduced to the Court of France, as the peculiar favorite of Madame Pompadore.

His other works, published while in Geneva, at Ferney, and at Paris, both comic and tragic, both philosophical and literary, gave him a very high rank amongst the men of literature and of taste; so that in the esteem of admiring myriads, he commanded the homage and guided the taste of the literati of the whole French Empire during the last half of the 18th century. While at Ferney, in the midst of his little colony of artisans, abounding in wealth, and rich in fame, he was not only in the continual receipt of the adulations of philosophers and princes, but also, of princely presents, and liberal gifts from some of the sovereigns of Europe. Dissatisfied with these rewards of his genius and labors; and wearied with the luxurious ease of that delightful abode, he languished for the daily incense of praise, and the admiring plaudits of the French Capitol. Even in his grey hairs, and

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEN OF GENIUS. 13

at the advanced period of four score and four years, he returned to the metropolis, as he said, "to seek glory and death." Honors extraordinary were crowded thick upon him on his arrival in Paris. The learned critics were envious of each other in the despatch with which they offered incense at his shrine; and finally, he was crowned with the poetic wreath in a full theatre, amidst applauding thousands. The excitement, however, was too powerful for his enfeebled constitution. The weight of so many honors oppressed him. The complimentary visits of Parisian ceremony stole away sleep from his pillow, and compelled him to resort to opium for relief. One large dose of which, finally took away his senses, and immediately despatched him from the worship of infidels to the presence of his God.

Thus perished this extraordinary genius; the founder of a new sect of philosophers, distinguished more for their wit and their licentiousness than for the profundity of their science or their influence in the cause of civilization. Thus perished the author of seventy-one octavo volumes, not one of which was seasoned with one pure emotion; with a single tribute to religion or pure morality; all of them, however, characterized by a great versatility of genius, a glowing imagination, a peculiar ease and fluency of style, and for a great variety of knowledge, such as it is; much of it, indeed, incorrect, little of it useful, and all of it poisoned with the seeds of anarchy, libertinism, and irreligion.— Thus perished the fickle minded, wavering, and inconstant Voltaire, who as some one has justly said, was a free-thinker in London, a courtisan at Versailles, a Christian at Nantz, and an infidel at Berlin.— Assuming at one time to be a moralist, pleading for toleration, and dissuading from war; at another, acting the buffoon; now writing a tragedy, then a farce; to-day a philosopher, cold as Diogenes; to-morrow an enthusiast, ardent as Peter the hermit; to-day a parasite, fulsome as Tertullus; to-morrow a satirist, severe as Juvenal; now a voluptuary, feasting in princely style, again a miserable ascetic, worshipping mammon; now as modest as a sage, anon as bold as an atheist, denouncing the Messiah, and contemning the hope of immortality.

Such was the man whose anarchical theories, whose polished libertinism, whose atheistic reasonings, more than those of any other, polluted almost all the illustrious youth of France during the reigns of Louis XV. and XVI. Such was the master spirit of the master spirits of the French Revolution;—that reign of terror whose infamous annals are destined to demonstrate to the human race the madness of atheism, the weakness of philosophy, the desolating tumults of passion, and the necessity of religion and righteousness, to the prosperity, the honor, and the happiness of every nation and people.

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But on what canvass can be grouped, and by what historic pencil sketched, the ruined myriads, deluded, polluted, and destroyed, by the conversation, writings, and examples of such a genius as that of Voltaire, Volney, Diderot, or that of our own less gifted, but equally morally distempered and licentious Paine. His 'Common Sense,' and his 'Rights of Man,' are but the charm through which he fascinated and beguiled untold thousands into the downward paths of ruin and disgrace;—temporal, spiritual, and eternal. He, too, was but the deluded votary of a more gifted and still more depraved genius.

And who were the Dantons, the Marats, the Robespierres of the age of despotism, the triumph of anarchy! Men of the school of Voltaire, Diderot, and Gabriel Mirabeau. It will remain a secret to the development of the great day, how much poison has been infused into society through the intoxicating cup of a false, though fascinating philosophy, sparkling with the brilliant display of elevated genius, administered by such men as the speculative Hume, the eloquent Gibbon, or the accomplished Rousseau.

Our two great historians, before they commenced their proud monuments of elevated genius, had travelled through France; and one of them both wrote and spoke the language of Voltaire as fluently and as eloquently as his own vernacular. These men had themselves drunk deeply of the continental philosophy—had become too familiar with the licentious principles of the 18th century. The first impulse to delineate the fortunes of England seems to have sprang up in the bosom of a sceptic, who had first conceived a false theory of the genius of human nature, and afterwards sought, in the annals of his country, facts to prove it. Such, it appears, was the character of David Hume. Destined to the law by his parents, "he preferred Virgil and Cicero, to Voet and Vinnius," while his taste for philosophy led him to write an "Inquiry into the principle of morals," a "Treatise on human nature," and an essay on "Natural Religion," before he completed a single volume of his history of England. A man of distinguished talents, and an elegant historian, he certainly is; but the spirit and tendency of his writings are most clearly, though most insidiously, irreligious and immoral. His sentiments are often clothed in equivocal and fallacious language, and are intended indirectly to sap and mine the influence of the Bible. With all "the careless inimitable beauties of Hume," as Gibbon calls them—i. e. "his solecisms, his scotticisms, his gallicisms, his violations of the rules of English grammar," severely exposed by Dr. Priestley in his philosophical disquisitions, he is still in language and style, the beau ideal of all English historians. But this is a small matter compared with the sly narcotic poison of his infidelity; which

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEN OF GENIUS. 15

has, in truth, perverted the facts of his history, and rendered it rather a panegyric of scepticism than a faithful record of facts. Like Voltaire, as one of our late reviewers has said, "Hume adopted history as the vehicle of opinions which he could make palatable to the million in no other way." His *suppressio veri*, and his *suggestio falsi*, have beguiled other writers into very great errors, distortions, and suppressions of fact. Keightley, in his "Outlines of History," Gleig, in his "Family History," and even Mrs. Markham in her history, so admirably adapted, in many respects, to children, have been imposed on by Hume; and that, too, when his infidelity perverted his genius, and discolored the facts which lay before him in the annals of the world. All this, and perhaps more, might be said of the still more highly endowed and more eloquently accomplished author of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire."

Gifted by nature, and adorned by art, no historian either in our language or in any other known to us, possessed a much more fascinating style of narration than Edmund Gibbon. If, indeed, second to any English historian, he is second only to the more learned and polished Robertson; not, indeed, in the rich and easy flowing eloquence of his splendid periods, but in the more sublime, more chaste, nervous and classic character of his general style and manner. But the subtle poison of an insidious scepticism is infused into the whole performance; and ere the youthful reader is aware of it, he is beguiled into an indefinable incertitude and dubiety on the whole subject of historical veracity, and charmed into an unutterable suspicion that Christianity and Polytheism are but modifications of the same superstitious credulity of poor human nature.

I presume not to descant upon the history of those mighty chiefs—the men of high renown—whose genius, like that of Byron, or that of Napoleon, have been the subject of a thousand comments—orations—eulogies. Those rare prodigies, like comets of stupendous magnitude, seldom appear in our own horizon; and when they do, are so far beyond the aspiration of our youth as to afford no very strong incentive to their ambition. As those burning mountains of lofty summit, seldom trod by human foot, need no parapet to prevent the too near approach of the unwary traveller; so these giants of enormous stature are placed so far above all aspiration, as not to seduce by their example, one in a hundred millions of our race. Still their history is a part of the history of humanity, and as such, is not without its use. Their towering ambition, transcendent success, and tragic end, together with the moral tendency of their course, are beacons, not without a moral influence to the human mind. The evils they have done while they

lived, and the evils they are still doing, and yet to do, cannot be easily computed.

The good or evil that men do while they live, lives after them; neither the one nor the other is "always interred with their bones."—Their example lives, and in the long series of cause and effect, in the complex and mysterious concatenation of things, their actions are pregnant with effects on human destiny, that whole centuries do not always either unfold or annihilate.

Can any one compute the expenditures of human life, the number of widows, orphans, and bereaved parents, occasioned by the insatiate ambition of the late Emperor of the French. What tears, and groans, and agonies, did each of his hundred battles cost the nations in which he sought that harvest of renown, which, for a few years, he reaped in the admiration of the world. But who can fix, either in time or place, the last effect which his wild career of glory shall have entailed upon the human race?

But it is not the military chiefs, the ambitious aspirants after civil or military renown, with whom we have to do.—A Voltaire, a Paine, a Byron, or a Scott, come more legitimately within the precincts of our subject. These all were men of high responsibilities, because of the greatness of their talents, their lofty genius, their rare attainments.—But whither tended the labors of their lives?—Of the two former, but one opinion obtains amongst all Christians—their whole influence was decisively against religion, morality, and good government. The French Revolution is a lesson known to all men, demonstrating the indissoluble connexion between atheism, anarchy, and misrule. It was as certainly the offspring of atheism, as the Spanish inquisition was the child of the papacy, or the temple of Jupiter Olympus, the creation of Paganism.

Men reason against both common sense and philosophy, when they argue either themselves or others into the hallucination, that a good civil government can any where exist, without sound religion and sound morality:—or, indeed, that a people can be moral, in the proper sense of the word, without religion. Without temples, altars, priests, and religion, by civil law established, they may, indeed, be intelligent, religious, moral; and, consequently, prosperous; but without true religion no state can be moral, prosperous, and permanent.—All empires that have fallen, all states and nations that have passed away, have perished through irreligion, immorality, and vice.

Now as the master spirits of the French Revolution were the disciples of Voltaire and his associates, we read the power, the character, and the tendency of their genius and talent in that momentous event,

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prolific of instruction, not only to the living, but to ages yet unborn.— If England in the days of her Commonwealth was a proof of the genius of her Cromwell; or the riches and glory of Israel, at the era of the erection of their temple, constituted a proof of the wisdom and sound policy of their Solomon; so was France in the days of her Pantheon, during the tyranny of her Danton, Robespierre, Marat, &c. a proof of the philosophy, policy, and virtues of her Voltaire, Volney, and Gabriel Mirabeau.

But why, it may be asked, mention in the same chapter such men as Byron, Burns, and Scott. This, indeed, demands an explanation. They are not, then, at all to be classed with such men as Voltaire, Volney, or Mirabeau, except as men of genius and favorites of public fame. Still the influence of a Byron, a Burns, a Scott, may be as greatly mischievous as their genius was transcendently great and admirable. That they have all said many beautiful things—that they have expressed the purest and the noblest sentiments and views in the finest style, in language the most chaste, the most classic, and the most exuberantly rich and fascinating is admitted, with the greatest pride of English literature and of Englishmen. That much of their poetry and fiction is deeply imbued with sentiments of piety and humanity, is also most cheerfully conceded; and that most men may improve their language, their taste, and their style by the perusal and the study of their admirable productions, we also admit. And if any one please to add, that three such men almost contemporaneous have not adorned any nation, ancient or modern, with richer specimens of rare genius, of the finest texture, and the most exuberant growth, I will not at all dissent from him; and yet I must say, that in view of the tendency, the whole tendency of the products of their genius, and in my estimate of human responsibility, I would not, for "all that wealth or fame e'er gave," be the author of their works. I cannot but view them as decidedly tending to impiety and consequently to immorality. They may not, indeed, Balwer-like, have made the libertine a successful adventurer, or the licentious rake a man of honor and of good fortune. They may not have decorated vice with the charms of innocence, or thrown around the sinner the robes of virtue; they may not have commended to juvenile fancy a plausible prodigal, or introduced to the favorable regard of unsuspecting youth some amorous knight of easy virtue, still they have so mingled up virtue and vice, piety and impiety, wisdom and folly, moral beauty and moral deformity, as to confound the understanding and blunt the pure sensibilities of our nature. They have created false virtues; and if they have not called good evil, and evil good, they have made certain vices of much

less frightful mein, under the names of gallantry, patriotism, chivalry, heroism, &c. Human nature is exaggerated, discolored, misrepresented, in many points. A wrong direction is given to the mind, false motives inspired, unworthy principles instilled in the minds of the less discriminative readers of their works, and wrong conceptions of honor, greatness, and goodness inculcated upon all. In some respects the author of *Waverley* is to be excepted from this sweeping censure.—Of a better temperament, of a more moral constitution, and of a more religious education, more historic too, and descriptive, than merely fanciful or imaginative, he is more conversant with fact and reality, and generally more nearly approaches nature and truth than most of his cotemporaries or predecessors. Still he occasionally outrages the moral sense, and good taste, by making his outlaws heroic, noble, and honorable men; thus creating false virtues, and dishonoring the true.—That as life was eking out he condemned his course, the prostitution of his admirable genius and unparalleled powers of description, is, to my mind a gratification, though no extenuation of the aberrations of his otherwise splendid and unparalleled career.

I have not arrayed before you, gentlemen, a per contra list of the great reformers and benefactors of mankind; I have not laid before you any samples of the men of genius selected from prophets, apostles, saints, or martyrs; I have not told you of the inventors of useful arts, of the founders of benevolent institutions; nor of the great and splendid discoveries of men of science. Nor have the Christian poets, writers, orators, reformers, missionaries, been arrayed before you. We have not spoken of the widespread and long-enduring influence of a Claude, a Wickliffe, a Luther, or a Calvin, nor of the bright deeds of illustrious fame of a Bernard, a Howard, or a Robert Raikes. No; these are common and familiar as household words. Yet the last mentioned of these, though of no remarkable genius, by setting on foot the Sunday school system, has done for the world more than all the conquerors of nations, founders of empires, and great political demagogues inscribed upon the rolls of fame. Eternity alone can develop the widespread and long-continued series of good and happy consequences, direct and indirect, resulting from their schemes of benevolence and deeds of mercy. Their noble influence may be compared in its beginnings to the salient fountain of some of earth's grandest rivers, which, though not ankle-deep, issuing from beneath a little rock on some lofty mountain's brow, after wending its serpentine way for thousands of miles through many a rich valley and fertile plain, and receiving the contributions of numerous tributary streams, finally disembogues its deep broad flood into the ocean, carrying on its majestic bosom the products

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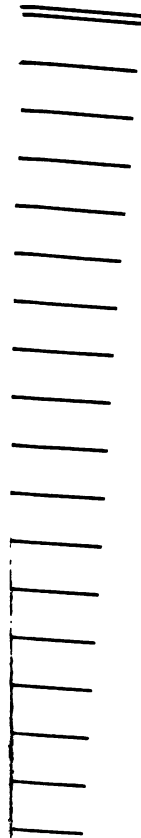
of many climes and the wealth of many nations. So, in the course of ages, the labors of the more distinguished benefactors of mankind, at first humble and circumscribed, yield largely accumulating revenues of glory and felicity; and carry down, not only to the remotest times and to the most distant nations, manifold blessings; but, occasionally transcending the boundaries of earth and time, they flow into eternity itself, carrying home to God and the universe untold multitudes of pure and happy beings.

But, gentlemen, to escape the imputation of merely theorizing on this subject in the form of vague generalities, allow me to press the subject on your attention in the more practical form of a few leading specifications:—

First, then, it is a paramount responsibility resting upon all persons having talents—upon every one possessing genius, to cultivate those noble powers which God has bestowed upon them. The gift of genius is a special call upon its possessor to cultivate and improve it to the highest possible degree. It is already established that men of superior intellect and moral power must govern the world. Men might as successfully legislate against the Ten Commandments, or enact statutes against conjugal affection or filial reverence, as to think of legislating against the subordination of inferior to superior minds. God has so constituted the world. As, then, it must be so, how great the responsibility resting upon those possessed by nature of the higher mental endowments to cultivate them to the greatest perfection. The marble in the quarry, the ore in the mountain, or the diamond in the sand, is not susceptible of greater improvement and polish by art, than is the human mind, especially a highly gifted mind. Education adorns as well as enlarges and strengthens the human soul. Demosthenes might always have stammered in his father's blacksmith shop but for his devotion to intellectual improvement.

But it is not *intellect* alone, however highly cultivated, that commands either the admiration or the reverence of mankind. It is not mere intellect that governs the world. *It is intellect associated with moral excellence.* Hence the necessity of the proper cultivation of the moral nature of man. That the divine similitude of man consists more in his moral, than in his merely intellectual constitution, needs neither argument nor proof. And that the Supreme Lawgiver and Governor of the universe reigns over the empire of mind by goodness, justice, and truth, rather than by mere intellect, whether called knowledge, wisdom, or power, is equally plain to all who can reason, or indeed think on what passes before them in the developments of nature, society, and religion.

That the moral nature of man is, therefore, to be sedulously and constantly cultivated, is not more obviously evident than is the still



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more interesting fact, that in the direct ratio of its importance is the facility with which it may be accomplished, provided it be submitted to the proper means, timously commenced, and perseveringly prosecuted when most susceptible of moral impressions. It is in this department that the law of improvement is necessarily the law of healthful exercise, whose immutable tendency is enlargement and corroboration. He, then, that would gain the full advantage of his talents, and secure the legitimate rewards of genius, must pay a supreme regard to the cultivation and high development of his moral nature.— In this way only can he obtain and wield an influence commensurate with all his powers of blessing and being blessed. Had Demosthenes, the model orator and statesman of both Greece and Rome, devoted his mighty genius to the moral as well as the intellectual improvement of his mind, the bribe of Harpalus, the parasite of Alexander, would not have tempted him; nor would he have terminated his days by poison, obscuring the glories of his great name by suicide, the greatest and meanest of mortal sins.

But in the second place, it is supremely incumbent on all men of genius that they choose a calling most favorable to the promotion of the best and greatest interests of human kind. In the social system there are many offices to be filled, many services to be performed, and consequently many persons needed to perform them. Of these offices there are all degrees of comparison—the needful, the more needful, the most needful—the honorable, the more honorable, the most honorable. The scale of utility is, indeed, the scale of honor. That calling is always the most honorable that is the most useful; and that is the most useful which is the most necessary to the completion and perfection of human happiness. 'The glory of God,' (a phrase more current than well understood,) the glory of God can best be promoted by promoting the happiness of man. Indeed, it can be promoted in no other way. Now as man is susceptible of individual and social happiness—of animal, intellectual, and moral gratifications and pleasures—that happiness is to be regarded the highest which comprehends the greatest variety and the largest amount of blessedness.

It so happens, however, that whatever produces the greatest amount of moral felicity, also yields the greatest variety of enjoyment. This is founded upon the fact that moral pleasure is not only most exquisite in degree, but is itself founded upon the harmonious fruition of our entire constitution. Hence the virtuous man is always the most happy man, because virtue is essential to the entire enjoyment of his whole animal, intellectual, and moral nature. The restraints which virtue imposes upon the minor gratifications are laid only for the purpose of securing the major both in variety and degree.

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Now as intellect and society are essential to morality and virtue, those offices and callings which have most to do with these, are most productive of human happiness. From conceptions of this sort arose the preference given to what are usually called the learned professions. But law, physic, and theology are but chapters in this great category; they are not, in my opinion, the component parts of it; they do not engross the learned professions. For unfortunately it does not always follow that those who engage in these three professions are either learned men or learned in their respective professions, nor is it true that these are the only callings that require much learning. Some of the mechanical arts, politics, and agriculture, require as much learning as either law or medicine. The school-master's vocation and that of the professor of language and science, ought to be not only regarded, but actually constituted, learned professions. Indeed, all professions would be the better of a little more learning than is usually thought indispensable. A learned carpenter and cordwainer there might be as well as a learned blacksmith, without any detriment to those callings or to the learned professions. And as all men are in this community, in virtue of our political institutions, constituted politicians, lawgivers, judges, and magistrates, whenever the people pronounce their sovereign *fiat*, the number of learned professions might be at least doubled, and perhaps quadrupled, without any detriment to the state or jeopardy of human happiness.

In this allusion to learned callings it may be regarded as a culpable omission should I not name the military and naval professions. True, indeed, so far as any callings are purely belligerent, they are not very nearly allied to the theory of human happiness, how important soever they may be to that of human safety. The preservation and enjoyment of human life, rather than the scientific destruction of it, falls more directly within the purview of our present remarks. Generals, heroes, and conquerors are very illustrious men in the esteem of the more rude and barbarous nations of the world; but as civilization advances, they uniformly fall back into the rank and file of Nimrod, Tamerlane, Alaric and Co.

One of the greatest misfortunes entailed upon society is the opinion that great Generals are great and noble men; and that those callings which have the most gunpowder, lead, epaulettes, and music about them, are the most splendid, honorable, and useful. False views of glory and greatness, are not indeed confined to those circles of earth's great ones, but are unfortunately extended to other circles connected as much with the animalism of human nature as they. Political chiefs and successful demagogues are every where hailed as men of great parts and good fortunes. Every Senator is an *honorable* man, and

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every Governor is an impersonation of *excellency*. The worship paid to these political dignitaries deludes the unwary into the idolatry of such offices and officials, and turns their judgment awry from the oracles of reason and the true philosophy of human greatness and human happiness. Indeed, such is the mania for political honors and political office, that more seem to desire the honor of an office than to be an honor to an office.

We would not, indeed, divest useful offices of their proper honor.— To serve a society faithfully, whether as a scavenger of Rome or as a king of the French, is an honor to any man. But to serve society in any capacity promotive of its moral advancement, is the highest style and dignity of man. True, indeed, that in the great category of moral improvement there are numerous departments, and consequently many offices. There are authors, teachers of all schools, ministers of all grades, missionaries of all mercies, ambassadors of all ranks, employed as conservators, redeemers, and benefactors of men. These, in the tendencies and bearings of their respective functions, sweep the largest circles in human affairs. They extend not only to the individual first benefitted, not only to those temporally benefitted, by him in a long series of generations; but breaking through the confines of time and space, those benefits reach into eternity and spread themselves over fields of blessings, waving with eternal harvests of felicity to multitudes of participants which the arithmetic of time wholly fails to compute, either in number or in magnitude. The whole vista of time is but the shaft of a grand telescope through which to see, at the proper angle, the teeming harvests of eternal blessedness flowing into the bosoms of the great moral benefactors of human kind. To choose a calling of this sort, is superlatively incumbent on men of genius. As Wesley said of good music, so say we of good talents. The devil, said the reformer, shall not have all the good tunes; and we add—nor the law nor politics, nor the stage,—all the good talents.

If men are held responsible, not only for all the evil they have done, but also, for all the good they might have done—as undoubtedly they will be; and if they are to be rewarded, not for having genius and talent, but for having *used* them in accordance with the Divine will, and the dictates of conscience, then what immense and overwhelming interests are merged in the question—to what calling should men of great parts and of good education devote themselves? Taste, inclination, and talent, are altogether, and always, to be taken into the account in a matter of such thrilling interest. But we are speaking of men of genius in general, and not of a particular class. The historic painter may, like our great West, give us Bible characters and Bible scenes. We may as well have the patriarchal scenes, tabernacle and temple scenes,

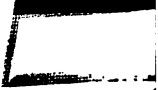
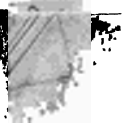
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official personages and festivals upon the walls of our own rooms and museums, as the Island of Calypso, or the ruins of the capitol, the pantheon, or the panorama of Mexico, Paris or Waterloo. The poet may sing of Zion, and Siloam; of Jerusalem and its King, as well as of the wrath of Achilles, the siege of Troy, or the adventures of Eneas. An orator may as well plead for God as for man, for eternity as for time, for heaven as for earth;—he may plead for man's salvation, as for his political rights and immunities;—and the same learning and eloquence that gains for a client a good inheritance or a fair reputation, might, also, have gained for him an unfading crown, and an enduring inheritance. It depends upon the taste of the man of genius of any peculiar kind, to what cause he may supremely devote it. It is his duty, however, to bring it to the best market, and to consecrate it to the noblest and most exalted good.

But, finally, it is not only incumbent on men of genius that they cultivate their talents to the greatest perfection, and that they select the noblest and most useful calling, but that they also prosecute them with the greatest vigor, and devote themselves to them, with the most persevering assiduity. It is not he that enters upon any career, or starts in any race, but he that runs well, and perseveringly, that gains the plaudits of others, or the approval of his own conscience.

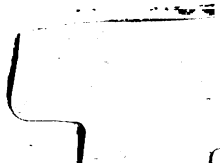
Life is a great struggle. It is one splendid campaign, a race, a contest for interests, honors, and pleasures of the highest character, and of the most enduring importance. Happy the man of genius who cultivates all his powers with a reference thereunto who chooses the most noble calling, and who prosecutes it with all his might. Such a one, ultimately, secures to himself the admiration of all the great, the wise, the good. Such a one will always enjoy the approbation of his own judgment and conscience; and, better still, the approbation of his God and Redeemer. How pleasing to him who has run the glorious race, to survey from the lofty summit of his eternal fame, the cumulative results of an active life, developed in the light of eternity.—How transporting to contemplate the proximate and the remote, the direct and the indirect beatific fruits of his labors reflected from the bright countenances of enraptured myriads, beaming with grateful emotion to him as the honored instrument of having inducted them into those paths of righteousness which led them into the fruition of riches, honors, and pleasures, boundless as the universe and enduring as the ages of eternity. That such, gentlemen, may be your happy choice and glorious destiny, is the sincere desire of your friend and orator.

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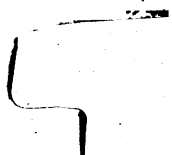
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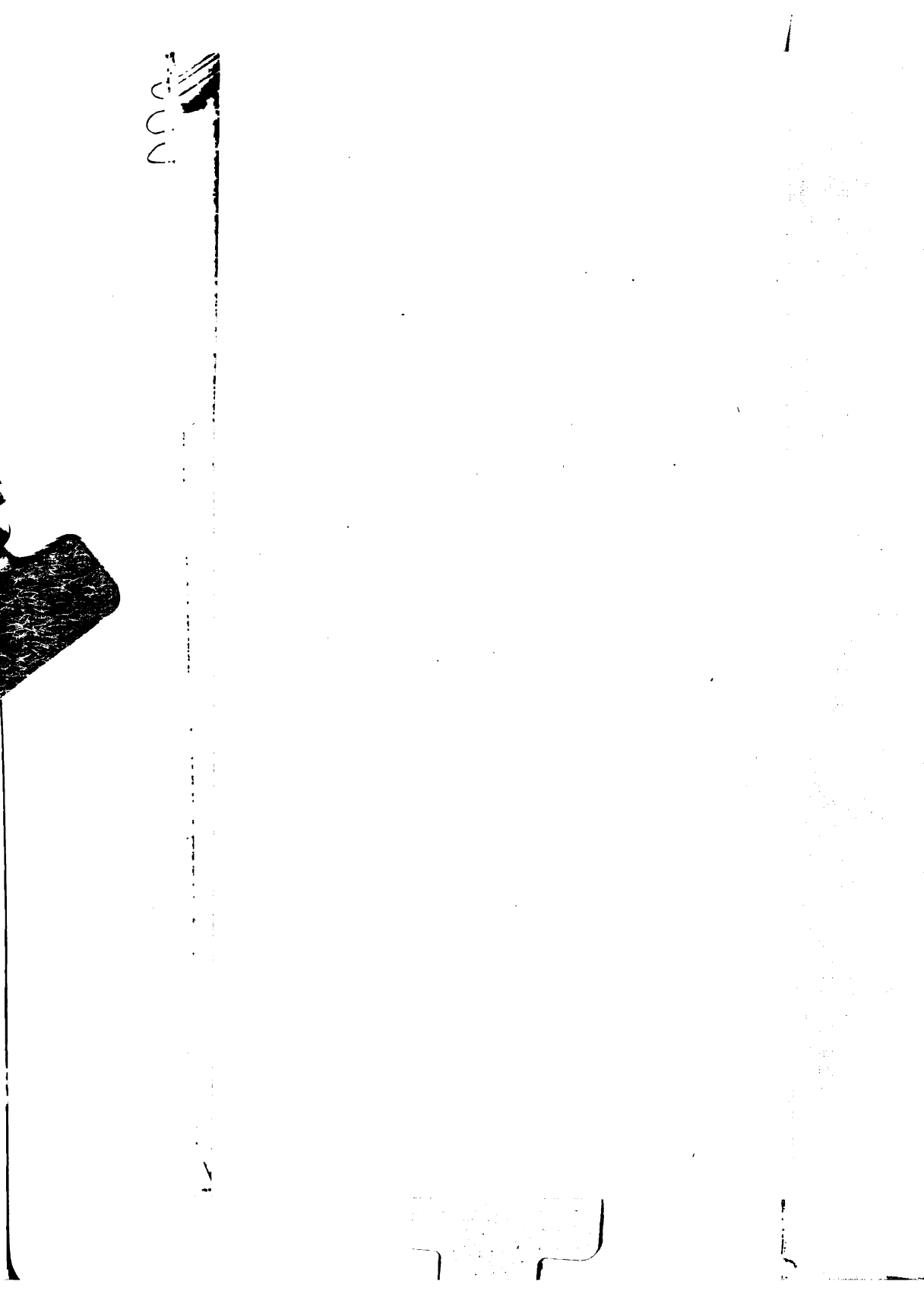


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